Table of District Meetings.

DIST'S.	CHURCHES.	COUNTIES.	TIMES AND PLACES OF MEETING.	AGENTS.
1st.	Sardis,	Tuckaloosa,	Friday before the 1st Sab. in Sept. 1833.	J. Pumphrey.
2d.	Hopewell,	Perry,	Friday before the 5th Sab. in Sept. 1833,	E. D. King,
3d.	Mt. Pleasant,	Tuskaloosa,	Friday before the 4th Sab. in Aug. 1833,	W. Travis.
4th.	Grants Creek,	Tuskaloosa,	Friday before the 1st Sab. in Aug. 1833,	T. Baines.

Table of Correspondence.

RECEIVED.

ASSOCIATIONS.	DOCUMENTS.	DELEGATES.	MODERATORS.	CLERKS.
Bethlehem,	Letter, Minutes.	A. Travis & K. Hawthorn,	Allen Travis,	R. Wassen.
Alabama,	Letter, Minutes,	Francis Baker,	F. Baker,	W. B. Haralson.
Muscle Shoals,			J. Burnes,	E. Meridith.
Mount Zion,	Letter, Minutes,	Philip Archer, T. W. Cox,	Sion Blithe,	A. J. Holcome
Bethel, A.	Letter,		J. W. Wilson,	T. Ringold.
Bethel, S. C.	Minutes,		T. Ray,	O. Woodward.
Georgia,			Jesse Mercer.	
Buttahatchy,	Letter, Minutes,	Silas Dobbs,	Henry Petty,	John Holber.
Mulberry,	Letter, Minutes,	Wm. Harris, Robert Martin,	Isaac Suttles,	Jno. Summers

RETURNED.

ASSOCIATIONS.	DOCUMENTS.	DELEGATES.	TIMES & PLACES OF MEETINGS.
Bethlehem,	Letter, Minutes,	Wm. Calaway, R. Marsh,	Friday before the 4th Sabbath of September, 1833, at Limestone Church.
Alabama,	Letter, Minutes,	Crow, Everett, McCraw,	Saturday before the 2d Sabbath in October at Old Town, Dallas County.
Muscle Shoals,	Letter, Minutes,	Barnes, White, Masrh, & Middleton,	Saturday before 4th Sab. in Sept. 1833.
Mt. Zion,	Letter, Minutes,	Marsh, Middleton, Bains, & White.	Saturday before 3d Sab. in Sept 1833, Canaan, Jefferson Co.
Bethel, A.	Letter, Minutes,	Holbrook, Veasey, Ryan.	Friday before the 1st sabbath in October, Mount Pleasant, Marengo County.
Bethel, S. C.	Letter, Minutes,		Saturday before the 1st Sabbath in Oct 1833
Georgia,	Letter, Minutes		Saturday before the 2d Sabbath in Oct. 1833.
Buttahatchy,	Letter, Minutes,	David Andrews, Vesey, White.	Friday before the 2d sabbath in September, 1853; Union Church, Marion County.
Mulberry,	Letter, Minutes,	Pratt, Dennis, & Haggard,	Saturday, before 4th L. D. in Sept 1833 Cahaba Val Meting House Bibb County.
Conecuh R.	Letter, Minutes,	Everett, Dennis,	Saturday, before the 1st L. D. Nov. 183 . Hopewell, Piko County.

MINUTES.

SATURDAY, 27th October, 1832.

1. The introductory sermon was preached by brother Ryan, he being appointed in case of failure in brother White last year, from Psalms 126, verse 3, "The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad."

2. The Delegates from the Churches convened in the Meeting House and after prayer proceeded to business; the letters from the Churches were read and the Delegate's names enrolled.

3. Elected brother Crow Moderator, and brother Simms Clerk.

4. The Moderator and Clerk, with brethren Ryan, Calaway and Marsh, were appointed a committee to arrange the business necessary to come before this body; Barnes, J. Foster, and S. Holloway, on finance. The Pastor and Deans of this Church, with brethren Holloway Wm. A Melton, L. Stevens, and C. Fennell, to arrange the preaching during this Meting, who report brethren J. A. Butler, William Harris and A. Travis to preach; Thomas W. Cox to close the exercise of the Sabbath by exhortation and prayer. The Sabbath was occupied by the brethren in the order of their names, and to a large and attentive congregation, they preached in the power and demonstration of the spirit of God—and the day of eternity will only reveal the good effects, produced on the hearts of the people, through their instrumentality.

5. Met pursuant to adjournment. After prayer proceeded to business. The names of the delegates were called—The constitution and rules of decorum read.

6. Opened a door for the reception of newly constituted Churches in our union, upon which Salem of Dallas, Mount Gilead of Bibb, and Friendship of Greene Counties petitioned by letters and delegates, they being found orderly and orthodox were received.

7. Called for correspondences from sister Associations, viz: Bethlehem, Alabama, Muscle Shoals, Mount Zion, Bethel, Bethel, S. C. Georgia. Buttahatchy, and Mulberry.

8. Appointed the following brethren to write to corresponding Associations viz: Holbrooks to Bethlehem, Everett to Alabama, Thomas Baines to Muscle Shoals, Robert S. Foster to Mount Zion, Holloway to Bethel, Marsh to Bethel, S. C. Finnell to Georgia, Barnes to Buttahatchy and Ford to Mulberry.

9. Appointed a Committee of Revision, viz: Brethren Ryan, Calaway, J. Foster, M. Collins and Pratt to examine correspondences.

10. Roop's Vallay Church petitioned for a letter of dismission which was granted

11. Received a letter from our sister, the Conecuh River Association kindly soliciting a correspondence with us, which we cordially accept, and for that purpose appoint messengers, and appoint brother Simms to write a corresponding letter.

12. That this Association may be enabled to furnish necessary materials for the history of the Baptist Denomination in the United States, as proposed to be published in the "Annual Register," at Philadelphia.

Resolved, That this Association request the Churches composing this body, to state in their letters annually to this body, the number of white male members, and white female members, and the number of colored members, separately: The pastors or supplies: Also the

Post Office nearest each Church; and the names of their deacons and clerks.

13. Received reports from district meetings, and their appointments arranged as appears in the table.

14. The next meeting of this Association, appointed at Philadelphia Meeting House, on Saturday before the fourth Lord's day in October, 1833. Brother M. White to preach the introductory sermon, and Brother J Veasy, in case of failure, and Brother B. L. Barnes to write the circular and choose the subject.

15. The clerk to superintend the printing and distribution of the minutes.

16. Letters to corresponding Associations, read and approved. The circular called for, (Brother Bains having failed to write according to the appointment of this body,) on motion a committee of seven, viz: Brethren Barnes, Crow, Simms, Ryan, Marsh, Callaway and M'Craw, to select one of two articles, viz: Fuller or Cone on close communion, and their choice be attached to the present minutes.

17. We recommend to our churches, to observe the first day of January next as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer to Almighty God, that he would avert the evils that seem to hang over us; that we may not be afflicted with the desolating pestilence, nor involved in political discord and commotion: And that revivals of the pure religion of Jesus Christ may abound, not only in our land, but throughout the habitable world.

18. On motion this body agree to publish in their minutes, from and after this session, once in four years, their Constitution, Abstract of Faith, and Rules of Decorum.

19. Called for the report of the committee on finance, which is as follows:

THE COMMITTEE IN ACCOUNT WITH ASSOCIATION, DR.

To cash remaining in the hands of the Clerk, - -	62
Cash received from the Churches, - - -	97 50

DISBURSEMENTS.

By deposit with superintendant for minutes, -	45 00
Paid the Clerk for his present years services,	15 00
Paid Bro. Bains for attending corr. Associations	5 00
" " Callaway " " "	6 00
" " M'Craw " " "	6 00
" " Reeves " " "	2 50
" " Marsh " " "	9 50
" " Ryan " " "	3 50
	92 50
	$5 60

20. *Resolved*, That this body tender their most hearty thanks to the friendly citizens of this vicinity for their extraordinary kindness and hospitality to the members of this Association during the present session.

Closed by prayer from the Moderator.

CHARLES CROW, *Moderator*.

REDDICK SIMMS, *Clerk*.

ARTICLES OF THE CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE 1. The association shall be composed of members chosen by the different churches in our union, who on producing their credentials, shall be entitled to seats.

ART. 1. The members thus chosen and convened, shall be known by the name of "*The Cahaba Baptist Association*" who shall usurp no authority over the churches in our union, or intrigue any of their internal rights: but shall merely be considered as an advisary council, in all matters relative to their internal concerns; nevertheless, it becomes necessary, in some cases, to have a uniform rule of procedure, namely: —If one church commit an offence against another, it shall be the duty of the offended to labour with the offender for satisfaction: if she fail of success, she shall call the aid of two or more churches in our union, to assist in laboring for satisfaction, and if final satisfaction, in the opinion of the Helps, thus called be not obtained, the aggrieved may bring the case before the association, which shall be taken up and decided, upon, according to its merits. If a serious difference should arise in an individual Church, which, upon due labor, cannot be reconciled, she shall call the aid of two or more Sister Churches, to assist in the work; and if a reconciliation be not effected, the Helps so called, or the Church, may bring the case before the Association, to be acted upon according to its merits; but the association will take cognizance of no case of the above kind, unless a due course of procedure shall have been previously pursued, according to the economy of the Church discipline, found in the 18th chapter of the gospel by St. Matthew, and other parts of the scripture, which define the nature of offences, and the manner of bringing offenders to trial.

ART. 3. The churches in our union shall transmit to every annual session of the Association, written communications, specifying the names of their messengers, their number in fellowship, baptised: received by letter, dismissed, excommunicated, restored, deceased, since the last session, which shall be read and minuted accordingly.

ART. 4. Every church in our union, shall be entitled to representation in the following manner. viz: Churches composed of fifty members or under, are entitled to send three Messengers, and for every fifty members that may be added one additional Messenger. Any church failing to represent herself, as above prescribed, shall state the reasons to the next session.

ART. 5. New churches may be admitted into our union, by messengers, bearing petitionary letters. If upon due examination, they be found orderly and orthodox, the Moderator shall manifest their admission by giving their messengers the right hand, in token of Christian fellowship.

ART. 6. The Association when convened, shall be governed by a regular and proper decorum, which she is authorized to form and amend according to her own views.

ART. 7. At every session of the association, a Moderator shall be appointed by, and from among the Messengers present, whose duty it shall be to see that the rules are strictly observed, and to take the voice of the Association on all subjects legally introduced. A Clerk shall also be appointed, whose duty it shall be to take proper and correct minutes of the proceedings.

ART. 8. The Association shall have power to exclude from her union, any Church that may violate the Constitution, or depart from the orthodox principles of the Gospel.

Art. 9. The Association shall furnish the Churches with the minutes of every session.

Art. 10. Every query sent by a particular Church, must be included in her letter certifying that she has endeavored to reconcile it but failed. In such a case, the Association shall take it under consideration, and the voice of a majority shall be considered an advisary answer, which shall be entered on the minutes.

Art. 11. Queries which immediately concern the general union of the Churches, sent by a particular Church, or introduced by proper motion, shall be taken up and decided on as soon as practicable.

Art. 12. Any Church in our union having a member who is judged to possess promising talents for the ministry, shall call, from two or more Churches, the aid of their ministers, and select members of the laity, who, in conjunction with the Church, shall examine the candidate, and if deemed qualified, may license him to preach the Gospel among the Churches at discretion, which shall be reported to the next Association and entered on the minutes.

Art. 13. Any Church in our union, having a preacher, whom she deems worthy of ordination, shall call a presbytery of ministers from sister churches, to officiate in the work; and all presbyteries, in the ordaining of Ministers, or Deacons, or in the constituting of Churches, shall be governed by the abstract of faith adopted by this Association.

Art. 14. Any Church in our union, having a Minister who may fall into disorder, if after all due labor with him he should continue refractory, and she considers him a fit subject for excommunication, shall have power to exclude him from fellowship: and it shall be the duty of that church, in such a case, to call a Presbytery, and through them, demand his credentials. If such a minister return and give satisfaction, the church shall have power to restore him to followship as a private member; but, if she wish him restored to the exercise of his Ministerial functions, she shall again call a presbytery, who shall be discretionally authorized to renew his credentials, which if renewed, shall be reported to the next meeting of the Association, and entered on the minutes.

Art. 15. The Association shall have a fund, supplied by the voluntary contributions of the Churches; and all monies thus contributed, shall be transmitted from the churches, by their messengers, and paid over to the committee on finance. This committee shall be appointed annually, whose duty it shall be to receive in charge the Association fund, and dispose of the same agreeably to order; and make, at every session, a fair and circumstantial report of their proceedings.

Art. 16. It shall be the duty of the Clerk of this Association to keep a regular file of the printed minutes of every session of this body.

Art. 17. The Association shall not adjourn any session until she shall have finished all the business on hand, except in extraordinary cases.

Art. 18. The minutes of the Association shall be read and corrected if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the session rises.

Art. 19. The Association shall, in all cases, be governed by a majority of the members present.

Art. 20. Amendments to this constitution may be made at any session of the Association, when a majority of the members shall deem it necessary.

ABSTRACT ARTICLES OF FAITH, ADOPTED BY THE CAHABA ASSOCIATION.

ART. 1. We belive in only one true and living God, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.

ART. 2. We believe that the Scriptures comprising the Old and New Testament, are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.

ART. 3. We believe in the doctrine of election, and that God chose his people in Christ, before the the foundation of the world.

ART 4. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

ART. 5. We believe in Man's incapacity, by his own free will and ability, to recover himself from the fallen state in which he is by nature.

ART. 6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God, by th imputed righteousness of Christ only.

ART 7. We believe that God's elect shall be called, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

ART. 8. We believe that the saints shall be preserved in Grace, and never fall finally away.

ART. 9. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the only subjects of Baptism, and that by immersion is the Apostlic mode.

ART. 10. We believe in the resurrection of the Dead, and in the General Judgement; and that the facility of the Righteous, and punishment of the Wicked will be eternal.

ART. 11 We believe that no minister has any right to administer the ordinences of the Gospel, but one who is regularly baptised, called, and comes under the imposition of the hands of a presbytery.

ART. 12. We believe that none but regularly baptised members have a right to commune at the Lord's table.

RULES OF DECORUM.

ART. 1. The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.

ART. 2. A Moderator and Clerk shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.

ART. 3. The Moderator shall be considered a judge of order and shall have a discretional right to call to order at any time.

ART. 4. A member not satisfied with his decision, may appeal to the Association on the same day but at no other time.

ART. 5. But one member shall speak at a time, who shall rise to his feet, and, on obtaining permission, proceed.

ART. 6. The Moderator, when addressed by a member for permission to speak, shall signify the same by naming the person, or otherwise.

ART. 7. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he depart from the subject, or use words of personal reflection. Every motion made and seconded, shall come under the consideration of the Association, unless withdrawn by him that made it.

ART. 8. Every case taken up by the Association, shall be decided on, or withdrawn, before another shall be offered.

ART. 9. When a question is taken up, after allowing time for the debates, the Moderator shall take the voice of the Association on the subject, and the members, on affirmative of the question, shall signify the

same by rising from their seats; and those on the negative shall retain theirs.

Art. 10. The Moderator shall pronounce the decision, before the standers resume their seats,

Art. 11. Any member wishing to retire, shall obtain permission of the Moderator.

Art. 12. No member shall speak more than twice to the same proposition, without permission of the Association, nor more than once, till every member wishing to speak, shall have spoken; nor shall any proposition be made to close the subject, until the debates have been carried through.

Art. 13. The appellation of Brother, shall be used in the Association, by members, in their addresses one to another.

Art. 14. The names of members shall be called as often as the Association may direct.

Art. 15. No member shall be tolerated in any practice which tends to interrupt public speaking.

Art. 16. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privilege of speaking as any other member, provided he appoint another to his seat during the time, but shall not vote on any question, unless the Association be equally divided.

Art. 17. Any member violating these rules, shall be reproved by the Moderator at discretion, but only on the day the breach shall have been made.

TERMS OF COMMUNION.

BY S. H. CONE.

Dearly Beloved Brethren,—In accordance with a resolution passed at our last annual meeting, "THE TERMS OF COMMUNION," will claim your attention, as the subject of our present circular address. It is to be regretted that the signs of the times should ever indicate the expediency of presenting this subject to your consideration, in a controversial shape; but since necessity is laid upon us, we desire to enter upon its investigation with all that alacrity which the love of revealed truth, and supreme regard for Zion's King, and unyielding attachment to the order of his house, are calculated to inspire.

The phrase "communion," or fellowship," is used in different senses in the sacred writings. It frequently denotes that holy enjoyment of the divine presence, and that soul-comforting participation of the Redeemer's fulness, which it is the privilege of believers to realize. The saints are joined to the Lord by one Spirit; they draw water out of the wells of salvation; God is their dwelling-place in all generations; and it is therefore said, truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. This fellowship does not necessarily stand connected with church government or relationship; it is neither confined to time nor place, nor does it bend to the control of earthly circumstances. It is felt by Jacob with a stone for his pillow; it drives away the fears and pains of the thief upon the cross; it cheers the hearts of Paul and Silas, though beaten with many stripes and thrust into the inner prison; and it converts the desolate Isle of Patmos into a paradise of heavenly rapture. The terms of this communion, all centre in the rich and distinguished grace of God.

The expression is sometimes used in a large and comprehensive

sense, to describe that fraternal affection and spiritual intercourse, which all those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, may righteously maintain with each other. Individuals attached to the different denominations of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Quakers, &c. may have good reason to entertain a favourable opinion of each other's Christian exercises; they may unite their efforts to multiply and distribute copies of the Bible, and send the gospel of salvation to the utermost parts of the earth; they may take sweet council together, and be mutual helpers of each others' joy; and their communion will be proportioned to the evidence which the parties furnish, of maintaining a close walk with God. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. But as this fellowship in the Gospel is enjoyed by individual believers who never unite with a particular church; as it exists in different degrees, according to the strength of their confidence that God has begun a good work in the heart, without reference to the ordinances or regulations of his house, it is an entirely different thing from church fellowship, and is by no means to be confounded therewith.

In modern phraseology the word "*Communion,*" is employed, by common consent, as expressive of that fellowship which experimental Christians have with the Saviour of sinners, and with one another, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; and this use of the phrase seems to be justified by the Apostle's language, 1 Cor. x. 16, The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? The single point, therefore, which we have now before us is, to answer the inquiry, What are the indespensible terms of this communion? or, in other words, what prerequisites of admission to the Lord's supper are marked out, in the New Testament, for the observance of the churches of Christ to the end of the world? To this inquiry we reply, regeneration, baptism, and a conversation such as becometh the Gospel of Christ; and in proof of the correctness of this reply, we appeal to the law and to the testamony.

The children of God are bound to give thanks always to their Heavenly Father, because he hath from the beginning chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto they are called by the Gospel; and THEN, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; and manifest their attachment to the laws, doctrines, and ordinances, once delivered to the saints. The primitive churches constituted under the immediate direction of the inspired apostles, were composed of self-condemned sinners who were by nature children of wrath even as others; but being pricked in their hearts and quickened by the Spirit of God, fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel. They believed the testimony given of God's dear Son, and gladly received the truth, were baptized both men and women. To the first Gospel church in Jerusalem it is said, the Lord added daily such as should be saved, and they continued stedfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. The church at Corinth consisted of those who were sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and who called upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. The members of the church at Collosse, had put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: and the brethren at Rome, were the called of Jesus

Christ, beloved of God, called to be saints. Now if these apostolic churches were erected upon correct principles, (and who so contumacious or schismatic as to deny it?) they are certainly to us infallible guides, and present us with a perfect pattern. If they received only such as professed to be born of God, and gave evidence that they were begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, we should imitate their example and if there come any unto us and bring not doctrine, we commanded not to receive him into our house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed: that is, he that welcometh to the privileges of the church, him that abideth not in the doctrine of Cnrist, is partaker of his evil deeds. It is therefore an established principle in Baptist churches to require of all candidates for admission, a declaration of what God hath done for their souls; and when satisfactory evi ence of a change of heart is exhibited, the first scriptural term communion, is elicited by the church. Should this fundamental principle ever be abandoned, we hesitate not to say, the fine, gold will become dim, the glory will depart from us, and the vengeance of Him who walketh in the midst of golden candlesticks may be justly apprehended.

That *Baptism* is a "Term of Communion," is manifest from the design and order of that ordinance: as well as from the uniform practice of the apostles.

It is the design of Baptism, among other important particulars, to exhibit the existence of a new relationship, and to declare to all around, the interesting fact, that the individual baptized has come out from the world, and enlisted under the banner of Christ. In this view of the subject, it is not merely the answer of a good conscience towards God, but it is also a grateful and public recognition of that grand line of distinction which the Redeemer has established between the kingdom of darkness, and that kingdom which is not of this world. For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. vi. 4. As it is evident that a man must enter into the kingdom, before he can be entitled to the immunities of a subject; that he must be received into the fellowship of a particular church, before he can enjoy the privileges of that church; even so, it is equally plain, Baptism, upon profession of faith in the Messiah, must remain an indispensible term of communion, until it can be proved that unbaptized persons were added to the churches planted by the apostles in different parts of the world. And this will appear yet more abundantly if we consider,—

The order which is uniformly observed in the New Testament, with reference to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. When the Great Head of the church sent forth his ministering servants to build up his kingdom in our ruined world, he gave them commission in the following words:—Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. This language is lucid and definite. It directed them first to teach, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, to preach the Gospel to every creature. When the word preached was accompanied by an unction from the Holy one, men were made wise unto salvation; they were effectually taught; they were made deciples; and then, and not till then, were the apostles commanded to baptize them. After this, they were to instruct

them to observe all things enjoined upon them by the Saviour; and among the all things, who dare deny to the Lord's supper a place? Since the Redeemer has sufficient wisdom to devise the most suitable ordinances, either for the comfort of his people, or as a test of their obedience; and since all power is given him to make laws in Zion, and fix the order of their observance; to his authority all Christians should certainly submit. But it is plain that baptism must precede the communion, not only because the Lord Christ hath so decreed, but because this order is necessary in the very nature of things; if there be an adaptation of the sign to the thing signified. We must first be made alive, before we need bread to sustain life; and in like manner, the ordinance which shadows forth the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, must of necessity, go before that which holds out to us in a figure the bread which come down from heaven, whereof if a man eat, he shall live forever. That this is correct, we most assuredly gather from the unvarying practice of of the Apostles themselves.

The preaching of Peter, upon a certain notable occasion; produced such an astonishing effect that thousands cried out Men, and brethren what shall we do to be saved? The preacher promptly replies, Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Ohrist, for the remission of sins. What follows? They that gladly received the word WERE BAPTISED. After baptism they were added to the church in Jerusalem, and then, participated in the communion, or the breaking of bread.

The conduct of Paul was precisely similar to that of his brother Peter. He came to Corinth, and taught the word of God among its inhabitants. Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptised. These baptized believers were then constituted into a gospel church, and kept the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as delivered to them by the Apostle. Acts xviii. 1 Cor. ii. 2. If therefore, the uniform practice of the Apostles justly challenges our imitation, we must inviolably adhere to the order which they have established.

The last term of church communion we have named, is a godly walk and conversation; and this position is easily maintained, both upon the principles of reason and revelation. The children of God are holy brethren: a royal priesthood—a peculiar people, zealous of good works. This description of them is given by one who cannot err; and it would certainly be incongruous and unnatural for such persons to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. How can two walk together except they be agreed? What communion hath light with darkness, and what fellowship hath Christ with Belial? are questions which need no comment?—they answer themselves. In extending the right hand of fellowship, therefore, a church must be satisfied that the individual soliciting admission has scriptural views of himself, and of God, and of the way of salvation by Christ alone, and of the work of the Spirit, and of the holy tendency of divine truth; and hence we are directed to mark and avoid those whose erroneous sentiments cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned. Rom. xvi. Moreover the candidate for church communion must not only converse about the things of God in a proper manner, but his deportment must correspond with his holy profession. If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, we must not keep company with such an one, no not to eat. 1 Cor. v. 11. and that course of conduct which cuts off from the church one who is already a member, must be, by parity of

reasoning, an insurmountable obstacle against admission to its privileges.

Our sentiments with reference to the terms of communion, have, in different ages and countries, occasioned the opprobrious epithets of "bigoted, uncharitable self-righteous," &c. to be heaped upon us with an unsparing hand; but these are weak and powerless weapons when employed against those who are armed with the sword of the Spirit, in defence of a divine institution. We shall close this epistle by replying briefly to some of the most plausible objections which are constantly urged against the sentiments we have advanced.

First objection. "You lay too much stress upon baptism by making it an indispensible term of communion.

To this we reply;—We pay no greater regard to it, nor do we give it a higher place in our system, than the Lord Christ hath enjoined, or the Apostles and primitive Christians, by their example, have warranted. And here we may ask, why should more stress be laid upon the Lord's supper than upon baptism; and why should many professing Christians so earnestly advocate the observance of the former; while they pervert, or entirely neglect the latter? Were not both ordinances instituted by the same Lord, and do they not, therefore, come to us clothed with the same authority? We know Pædobaptists are in the habit of calling baptism a nonessential; an external rite; a mere ceremony; &c. If this be true, we would inquire, what more is the supper? Is it a Savior! But if these sacred institutions, be indeed, as we believe, signs of important and essential truths, baptism is unquestionably as significative as the breaking of bread, and exhibits, emblematically, a large proportion of the distinguished doctrines of the gospel. Upon an investigation of the New Testament, we find that baptism, of the two, is much the more frequently mentioned, and baptized believers are affectionately and repeatedly exhorted, so to walk in Christ Jesus their Lord, as in that ordinance they have put him on. Taking then the Holy Book as our only all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, we have the highest authority for saying, We give to baptism which Christ appointed as the first gospel institute, as a test of his children's obedience and a lively emblem of their renewal by the Holy Ghost, exactly the situation which the master of the house has designated; and with a *thus saith the Lord* sounding in our ears and penetrating our hearts, it is not possible that we should listen to the doctrines or commandments of men.

A second objection; charges us with causing a seperation between the children of the same Heavenly Father.

Suppose we grant that baptism is an insuperable barrier in the way of our communing, in church capacity, with unbaptised persons; does it necessarily result from this concession, that the blame righteously attaches itself to the skirts of our garments? Shall those who understand and keep the ordinances, in their nature, order, and design, as they were originally delivered to the churches, be condemned? and those who depart from them, and embrace a "figment of their own imagination," be justified? God forbid! We hesitate not to say, most explicitly, that baptism is a separating line, but it is one of the Lord's own making, and we endeavour constantly, both by preaching and example, to enlighten the minds of our Pædobaptist friends on the subject. We warn them of their errors: we hold up to them the truth; we point them definitely to chapter and verse; and we exhort every believer among

them, quite as often as they wish to hear us, to arise and be baptised and wash away their sins, (in a figure,) calling upon the name of the Lord. —We are honest and sincere in these declarations, and in making them thus plainly, it must be evident to the candid and judicious, that we cannot have any by-ends, or measures of more expediency to promote. We wish the truth, and the truh alone as it is in Jesus; every where to prevail; and we are grieved in heart, that those whom we respect and love on so many other accounts, should, in this particular, persist in treading the pathway of disobedience, boldly rejecting the counsel of God in not being baptized according to his commandment. If our veracity and Chistian affection, touching this whole matter, he unjustly called in question, we are permitted to adopt the language of a Baptist, and say: Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward. 2 Cor i. 12.

A third objection states, that it is the Lord's table, and therfore we have no right to hinder those who wish to approach it.

That it is the Lord's table, is the appropriate and sufficient answer to this objectson. Were it ours, we might cheerfully admit to it the objector and his friends: but since it is confessedly the Lord's table, we dare welcome to it only such as HE invites. The deciples were baptised before Christ instituted and administered to them the supper. John the Baptist was sent to prepare a people for the Lord, and the deciples were evidently among the number of those who justified God; and if so, they must have been necessarily baptised with the baptism of John; otherwise they could not have been obedient hearers and doers of the word, and imitators of the example of their Lord and master. Luke vii 29. Mat: iii, 23 17. 1 Peter, ii. 21. In perfect conformity with this view of the subject, are the words of Peter: Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the Baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. Acts, i. 21, 22. Here we learn that Peter and his brethren began their Christain profession at the baptism of John, and hence the inference is irresistible, that there were none but Baptists with our Lord when he gave them the bread and cup, and said, Do this in remembrance of me. As the sacred oracles, therefore, uniformly teach that Christains, in the Apostles' days, were baptized before they came together in one place for the breaking of bread, we are confirmed in the sentiment, that the only guests invited to partake of this feast are such as have been, upon profession of their faith, buried with Christ in baptism; nor can we approach the table with the unbaptized, without acting in direct opposition to the precept and example of Him, in whom are hid all the traasures of wisdom and knowledge.

A fourth objection is presented in this shape: We conscientiously believe ourselves to be baptised; you are not the judge; to our own master we stand or fall.

This objection brings us at once to the question, What is Christain baptism? Is it sprinkling, or is it pouring? With the New Testament in our hands, we most confidently and unhesitatingly answer, neither. It is immersion in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. And here we cannot but say to our cavilling friend, when were you baptised? "In infancy." Are unconscious babes, or the

unbelieving, unprofessing seed of pious parents, proper subjects of baptism? Whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, upon the testimony of God we are obliged to answer, no.—These things were not so in the beginning; for it is written, Then they that gladly received the word were baptized, Acts 2. And the Jailor was baptized, he and all his; straightway, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. Acts xvi. Consequently those who believe and rejoice in Christ Jesus are, according to the Scriptures, the only persons to whom we are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism. But we are told that whether Pædobaptists have perverted christian baptism both in its design and subjects, or not, we have no right to judge.—This equivalent to saying that an individual ought to be admitted to church fellowship because he thinks himself entitled to that privilege, without reference to the opinion which the church may entertain upon the subject. It requirse no argument to prove the absurdity of this position. To adopt it would speedily ultimate in the dissolution of any society. That there must be an agreement in sentiment between a church and a candidate for admission to its privileges; and that the church must necessarily judge of the candidate's qualifications, are both self-evident and scriptural truths. Since Christ then has commanded us to hold fast till he come, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we are under the most sacred obligations to exhort one another daily; to warn the unruly to look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; and to be very careful, not only to veneratе his institutions ourselves, but also that they be observed in their purity, by all such as solicit communion with us at the table of the Lord.

A fifth objection, viz: That the saints will all commune together in Heaven, and ought therefore to do so on earth, is thought to be a very strong one, but really we are not able to perceive its force. We rejoice in the anticipation of that perfect union and uninterrupted fellowship, which the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in Heaven, shall, to all eternity, enjoy; but whatever may be the terms of communion in the world of glory, we are fully persuaded that while here, the revealed will of Christ, and not what shall take place after death, should be the only man of our counsel, a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path; and we are equally certain, that when we see Jesus as he is, and love him as we ought, the least of his commandments will not be esteemed either trifling or nonessential.

The last objection which our limits will allow us to notice, supposes that strict communion is inconsistent with brotherly love and Christian forbearance.

By adverting to the distinction made in the commencement of this letter, between communion with God, our fellow-christians, and a particular church, this objection will be stripped of all its difficulties. It will there be seen that real believers may hold converse with the Deity, and love each other as brethren in the Lord, without, walking together in church relationship. The Baptists differ from all others in their views of a Gospel Church, and scriptural qualifications for admission to its priviliges; but these views we believe to be coincident with the directions of the Saviour, and the example of Apostles and primitive Christians and having maintained them in the face of persecution, danger, and death, from the days of Paul to the present moment, we cannot abandon them, until convinced that we have hitherto misapprehended altogether the language of the New Testament. Nor can this

course of conduct be righteously construed into a breach of brotherly love and Christian forbearance, until it can be proved that we ought to love men more than we love God, and that the charity which rejoiceth in the truth, requires us to disregard the commandments and dispense with the ordinances of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Finally, brethren, Farewell! Adhere steadfastly to the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, as he hath delivered them to us; and as there is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so we beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord be with you all. *Amen.*

Erratum.—In the 5th page, 18th article for "once in four years," read "once in eight years." The error was discovered and corrected after a part of the first form was worked off.